

## **CAMP MINDEN (EXPLO SYSTEMS, INC.)**

**QUESTION:** What is EPA doing to ensure that the explosive materials located at Camp Minden, Louisiana are expeditiously removed and that another explosion at the site does not occur?

### **ANSWER:**

- EPA is closely monitoring the explosive risk posed by the potentially unstable explosives stored at Camp Minden through coordination with the Louisiana Military Department (LMD), Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ), Louisiana State Police (LSP), and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF).
- EPA is actively engaged at this dangerous site which will require at least \$30 million to expeditiously address the imminent threat caused by the explosives at Camp Minden.
- EPA negotiated an Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) with private parties to remove approximately 3 M lbs. of explosives stored at Camp Minden with work to begin in April 2014 at a cost of approximately \$15 million. EPA continues negotiations with other PRPs on an additional 15 M lbs. of explosives. If agreements cannot be reached, EPA will consider issuing unilateral orders or other enforcement authorities under RCRA and CERCLA.

### **BACKGROUND**

- On October 15, 2012, an explosion of an explosive magazine at Camp Minden, Louisiana (the former Louisiana Army Ammunition Plant), prompted attention from EPA Region 6, LSP, LDEQ, ATF, and national media.
- The explosion was caused by explosives formerly owned by Explo Systems, Inc. Explo was required to demilitarize and dispose of military munitions and materials under a Department of Defense (DOD) contract. Investigations revealed that Explo was illegally and improperly storing approximately 10 million pounds of explosive materials (M6 propellant) throughout the facility, creating an imminent and substantial endangerment to human health and the environment.
- The material stored onsite currently poses an explosive risk even though it is stored in magazines. On June 20, 2013, the DOD Explosives Safety Board (DDESB) cited concerns with the deteriorating stability of the M6 Propellant and recommended disposal of the materials. Based on the risk of auto-ignition and explosion of the M6 Propellant and the DDESB recommendations, EPA Region 6 notified all PRPs that the removal of the explosives at Camp Minden is needed by August 2015, to prevent another magazine explosion.
- In September 2013, the Governor of the State of Louisiana declared a state of emergency at Camp Minden and has reissued the proclamation keeping a continuous declaration of emergency at the site.
- Since August 2013, EPA Region 6 and Federal Facilities Office have attempted to negotiate Site clean-up actions with the PRPs, including the US Army, through official correspondence, General Notice Letters, and Administrative Orders on Consent (AOCs).
- EPA is continuing negotiations with the PRPs in order to reach an agreement under an AOC. LMD and EPA recently agreed to continue negotiations on an AOC through April 11.
- EPA is prepared to utilize all its enforcement authorities against PRPs who do not sign an AOC with EPA to remove the explosive threat.